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Council Offices,  
STURMINSTER NEWTON,  
Dorset.

21st March, 1947.

To The Chairman and Members of the Sherborne  
Rural District Council.

Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1946.

The Report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of Article 17(5) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935.

A comprehensive factual report was submitted last year and in this year's Report facts and comments are limited to matters not previously referred to.

The progress in the provision of new houses did little during the year to relieve the unsatisfactory housing conditions under which many people are having to live.

The incidence of infectious disease calls for no special comment and it is gratifying to note that there was no rise in the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis.

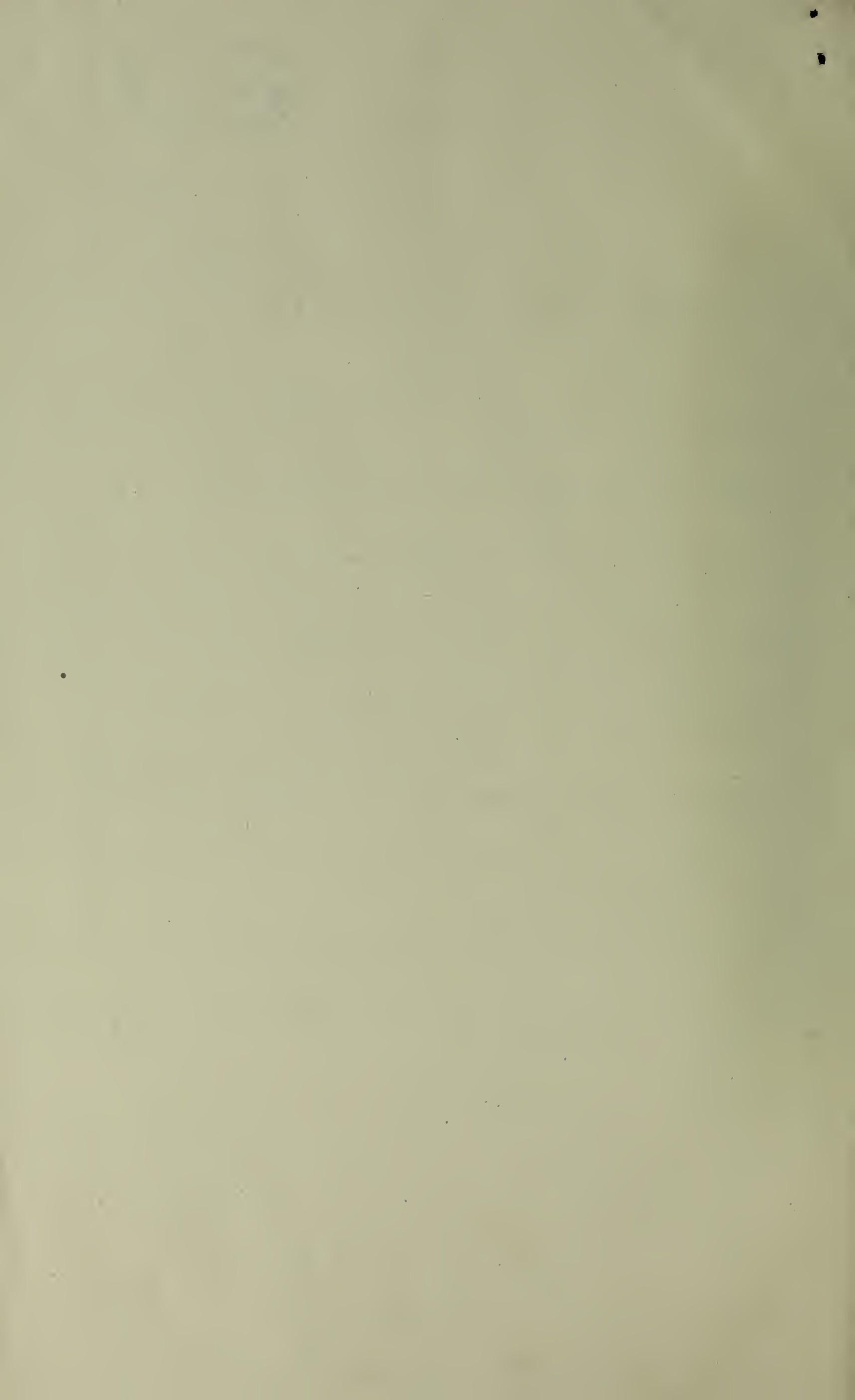
I am indebted to Mr. Shepherd, your Senior Sanitary Inspector, for help during the year and assistance in compiling this Report, and to my clerk, Mrs. Bourne, for her efficient services during the year.

I must also thank you Madam and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

*K. D. Pearson*  
Medical Officer of Health.



MARY

ADDENDUM TO ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH TO THE  
SHERBORNE RURAL DISTRICT  
FOR THE YEAR - 1946.

VITAL STATISTICS (CIVILIAN)

POPULATION - (Registrar General's Estimate) - 5,220

LIVE BIRTHS	Total <u>90</u>	Male <u>47</u>	Female <u>43</u>	
Legitimate	43	37		
Illegitimate	4	6		
				Rate per 1,000 resident pop:
				17.2
STILLBIRTHS	3			
	1	2		
DEATHS	61	20	41	Rate per 1,000 resident pop:
				= 0.53
Deaths from Maternal Causes - All in infants under one year	3	11		
Infantile Death rate per 1,000 live births				0.53
" from preventable disease	1	Influenza		
" from road traffic accident	1			11.5
				13.1
				31.6
				43.

Comparative figures for  
(a) North Dorset (b) England & Wales.

15.8 19.1

17.2

15.8

19.1

Stillbirths

1

2

Rate per 1,000  
resident pop:

0.53

11.6

11.5

31.6

43.

Deaths

61

20

41

Rate per 1,000  
resident pop:

0.53

11.6

11.5

31.6

43.

Deaths from Maternal Causes - All  
in infants under one year

3

11

31.6

Infantile Death rate  
per 1,000 live births

33.3

11.5

31.6

" from preventable disease

1

11

31.6

" from road traffic accident

1

11

31.6

N.F. Pearson  
Medical Officer of Health.





THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
TO THE  
SHERBORNE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL  
for the year

1 9 4 6.



## 1. STAFF.

### Medical Officer of Health:-

Until I resumed duties as your Medical Officer of Health on 1st April, 1946, Dr. G. Bodley Scott was your temporary Medical Officer.

## 2. STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area	-	41,481 acres.
Rateable Value	-	£23,513
Production of a penny rate	-	£99

### Vital Statistics.

These are not yet available. They will be submitted as an addendum to this Report on receipt from the Registrar General.

## 3. WATER SUPPLIES - GENERAL.

In general the water supplies in the district have been adequate throughout the year owing to the exceptionally heavy rain during the Summer months.

The present supplies are, however, insufficient to meet estimated future requirements (principally agricultural). To meet these needs a comprehensive scheme has been prepared and adopted by the Council for a public water supply to the Northern Area and to augment the existing Southern Parishes Supply. Trial bore holes for a new source of supply have been sunk at Thornford and have yielded 1,025,000 gallons per day of water both chemically and bacteriologically satisfactory.

During the sinking of these bores a temporary shortage of water was caused to Thornford Parish whose water supply (derived from surface springs) was adversely affected.

Chlorination of the principal council supplies was maintained during the year. It was impossible however, to arrange for the Adber Supply to be treated and in view of the unsatisfactory method of chlorination of the Hilfield Springs of the Southern Parishes supply steps are being taken to provide for additional settlement of this water before treatment and it is hoped that this will make efficient chlorination possible.

### Leigh Water Supply.

Chlorination of this supply was commenced during the year and steps were taken to safeguard the source of this supply.

### Defective Mains.

Many bursts were experienced during the year in the cast iron mains from the action on them of the Oxford Clay in which they are laid. It has been decided to relay approximately 1,700 yards of one affected main in asbestos pipes.

### Means of Supply.

It is estimated that approximately 900 houses have an individual piped water supply from the council's main into their houses. Approximately 300 houses derive their water supply from the council mains by means of standpipes. The remainder of the houses in the area (720) derive their supplies from private sources and it can be reasonably estimated, in the absence of accurate figures, that at least one third of these derive their supply from wells or standpipes.

In short, out of 1620 houses in the district it is estimated that one third, approximately 500 houses have no piped water supply into the house and, therefore, it can be presumed, have no sink. Section 137 of the Water Act, 1945, requires that a house shall be provided with a piped water supply into the house. When labour and materials are available the Council will have to give further consideration to this matter in respect to houses not complying with the Act.

## Poyntington.

The supplies are from shallow springs and are unchlorinated. The present bacteriological condition of this water is unsatisfactory. One source of supply is so liable to dangerous pollution that it should be abandoned. The remaining sources require attention to reduce the risk of contamination at source and chlorination. It is regretted that you have decided to exclude this Parish from inclusion in the comprehensive scheme covering the other Northern Parishes.

## Oborne.

This supply is derived from shallow springs and gives periodic unsatisfactory bacteriological results. Furthermore, it is liable to pollution from the nearby river Yeo which is polluted from the Poyntington Sewage Works. The supply is inadequate to meet the needs of all the houses dependent on the supply. Some of these houses are dependent for their water on standpipes as far distant away as 100 yards or more.

The supply is equally inadequate for the new Council houses erected in Oborne. I would recommend that consideration should be given for Oborne to be included in the proposed scheme for a new supply to the Northern Parishes or alternatively arrangements should be made for a new supply to be afforded from the Sherborne Urban Council's main supply.

## 4. SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

### Particulars of New Works carried out during the year.

#### Yetminster.

Filtering media of the filter bed had to be removed and approximately 100 tons of new 'Altacon' filter media was provided - the effluent has gradually improved since the use of this new media.

#### Holwell.

The effluent from the filter bed has not been satisfactory and further work is in hand to improve it.

#### Trent.

A new 12" drain was laid across Gascoyne Field for a distance of 363 feet to take the road surface water and sewage from certain properties in the village of Trent.

#### Thornford.

Drainage to certain premises and road surface water discharged into an open pond thereby causing a nuisance. A new 12" drain was laid for a distance of 20 yards to take this drainage further away from nearby houses. The nuisance has been abated.

#### Proposed Works.

Comprehensive sewage schemes for the parishes of Poyntington, Oborne, Bradford Abbas, Bishops Caundle and Alweston and a combined scheme for Thornford, Yetminster, Chetnole, Leigh and Ryme Intrinsica have been adopted by the Council and submitted to the Ministry of Health for approval.

## 5. PUBLIC REFUSE COLLECTION.

No change to report.

## 6. FACTORY EFFLUENTS.

No action necessary.

## 7. RIVER AND STREAMS POLLUTION.

### River Yeo, Poyntington.

Action was taken to reduce pollution to the river from effluent of the Council's Poyntington Sewage Works and to provide alternate water supply for cattle using the stream.

## 8. CESS POOL CLEANSING.

During the year a trailer type cess pool emptying pump complete with two wheeled trailer and accessories, was purchased.

## 9. HOUSING.

### Existing Premises.

#### 1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year.

1.(a)	Total no. of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts)	965
(b)	No. of inspections made for the purpose	1660
2.(a)	No. of dwelling houses (included under (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925)	930
(b)	No. of inspections made for the purpose	1205
3.	No. of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.	73
4.	No. of dwelling houses (exclusive of those ref. to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	492

#### 2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notices:-

No. of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequences of informal action by the L.A. or its officers	67
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#### 3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-

##### (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect to which notices were served requiring repairs	10
(2) No. of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-	
(a) By owners	4
(b) By L.A. in default of owners	Nil

##### (b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-

(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect to which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	14
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(2) No. of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-	
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(a) By owners	3
(b) By L.A. in default of owners	Nil

##### (c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) No. of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
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(2) No. of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil
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(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| (1) No. of separate tenements or underground rooms<br>in respect of which Closing Orders were made  | Nil |
| (2) No. of separate tenements or underground rooms<br>in respect of which Closing Orders were deter-<br>mined; the tenement or room having been render-<br>ed fit | Nil |

After seven years, during which routine inspection and repair work of old property has been impossible it is only to be expected that at the present time the general sanitary condition of many houses in the district falls short of acceptable standards of fitness. Whilst the importance of the provision of new houses is paramount, the very limited extent to which labour and materials can be made available for repair work is leading to rapid deterioration of property which will sooner or later deteriorate into a state beyond which it will be unfit for repair or reconditioning.

Housing Act 1936, Part IV - Overcrowding.

(a)	No. of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	23
(b)	No. of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	22
(c) (i)	No. of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	3
	(ii) No. of persons concerned in such cases	20
(d)	Particulars of any cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding	Nil

No special inspection was carried out to ascertain how much overcrowding is present in the district and the figures given only relate to cases met with in the course of other duties. The cases referred to are ones of statutory overcrowding under the Housing Act, 1936. When it is realised that a man and wife together with two adults of opposite sexes can live in a house with two bedrooms and one living room without statutory overcrowding occurring it will be appreciated how low a standard of overcrowding the Act lays down. The standard is quite inadequate for all purposes other than for the identification of the very worst cases and the extent of true overcrowding in the district can reasonably be assumed to be very much greater than the above figures, unsatisfactory enough as they are, suggest.

No. of houses inspected for use in connection with evacuation or the housing of other inadequately housed persons	20
No. of inspections made	45
No. of properties requisitioned by the Council at the end of the year	25
No. of houses on which Demolition or Closing Orders have been made which are allowed to be occupied under Licence by the L.A.	4

Housing Survey.

The Housing Survey called for by the Minister of Health was continued during the year.  
The results up to the end of the year were as follows:-

Total houses in the district	1620
Total houses inspected	920

No. of houses fit in all respects or requiring only minor repairs	636
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No. of houses requiring extensive repairs	276
No. of houses requiring reconditioning	43
No. of houses only fit for demolition	65

The general picture presented by the Survey to date, and there is no reason to assume that the final figure will be materially different, is that approximately 60% of the houses are fit or require minor repairs, whilst 20% require extensive repair which can be carried out at reasonable cost. The remaining 10% cannot be repaired at reasonable cost and of these over half are only fit for demolition.

#### New Houses.

No. of completed new houses provided by the L.A. during the year:-

1. Temporary prefabricated bungalows	Nil
2. Swedish Timber	Nil
3. Traditional type	5

#### Applicants for new houses.

At the end of the year the total number of applications outstanding for houses was.....228

- (a) from residents within the district ....176
- (b) from residents outside the district ... 52

#### Allocation of New Houses.

The points system adopted by you for the classification of applicants for new houses ensures that those applicants living under insanitary and overcrowded conditions or requiring rehousing on other medical grounds are brought to the notice of your Tenants Selection Committee so that allocation can be made in accordance with the requirements of Section 85 of the Housing Act 1936.

#### Population.

I have not previously drawn your attention to the changing structure of the population of the country. Whilst the expectation of life has steadily increased the birth rate has steadily fallen. The result is, that although the population of the country is still increasing it is doing so chiefly on account of a larger number of persons reaching an advanced age. Whilst in 1900 there were less than 2 million persons over 65 years of age, it is estimated that by 1951 there will be over  $5\frac{1}{2}$  million persons over 65 years of age. The implications of such a change in the structure of the population is of grave economic consequence but I bring the matter to you particular notice to emphasise the need for adequate provision being made for the proper care and housing of elderly persons who by reason of age or infirmity cannot look after themselves.

Whilst the care of such persons is not directly your responsibility a local Housing Authority can do much to assist and make happier the life of aged persons, by the provision of suitable accommodation designed to meet their particular needs. Not only does the provision of small easily erected and relatively cheap two or three roomed dwellings, appropriately planned for occupation by aged persons, make life more comfortable for them, but it often means that more spacious accommodation is made available for the use of younger married couples with families. Again, many of the applications for new houses come from young newly married people or persons awaiting a house to get married. These small dwellings suitable at a later date for the use of aged persons as the increasing demand becomes evident, could well be occupied by newly married persons for the first few years of their married life. It is estimated that 15% of council houses now built could usefully be of a type suitable for aged persons.

#### 10. SANITARY INSPECTIONS.

##### No. of Sanitary inspections carried out during the year.

(1) Total no. of inspections (under all headings)	2774
Total no. of Informal notices served	46

Total no. of Informal Notices complied with	16
Total no. of Statutory Notices served	10
Total no. of Statutory Notices complied with	7
(2) No. of inspections carried out during the year under:-	
(a) Factories Act	18
(b) Shops Act	15

(3) No. of sanitary inspections of schools - giving particulars of works or alterations effected as a result of notices served formal or informal.

6 inspections of schools were made.

#### Inspection and Supervision of Food Milk Supply.

(a) No. of persons on Register at the end of 1946	274
No. of dairy farms and other dairy premises on Register at the end of 1946	274
No. of dairy farms inspected during 1946	93
No. of inspections	108
No. of Notices served	10
No. of Notices complied with	5
No. of Milkshops inspected during 1946	Nil
No. of inspections	Nil
No. of Notices served	Nil
No. complied with	Nil

#### Meat and other Foods.

No slaughtering is carried out in your district. Your Sanitary Inspector acts as Meat Inspector in the Sherborne Urban District.

Number of inspections carried out at:-

(a) Premises registered for the manufacture of ice cream or prepared meals, etc.	5
(b) Food premises (otherwise subject to the Food and Drugs Act, 1938)	5
(c) No. of Notices served	Nil
(d) No. of Notices complied with	Nil

#### Food Handling.

Outbreaks of disease due to bacterial contamination of food during preparation or sale are by no means uncommon. Only those of general public interest reach the public press. You have been free of any such outbreak in your district.

Nevertheless, I can feel no confidence that the population is safeguarded against infection from food, ice-cream, etc., when the accepted standard of hygiene amongst food handlers throughout the country is so low.

The standards laid down in Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 are inadequate and do not apply to all premises. No provision is made for adequate wrapping of food stuffs and it is regretted that the new draft regulations, with regard to the manufacture of ice-cream do not call for proper sterilisation of utensils used, or lay down a bacterial standard of purity.

#### 11. NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS).

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Pneumonia	6	-	
Scarlet fever	11	11	
Whooping Cough	15	-	
Erysipelas	1	1	

4 - 1 case diagnosed sore throat.

The end of the year saw the closure of the North Dorset Joint Hospital Board's Temporary Isolation Hospital at Vine House, Sturminster Newton. Provided that beds are available, cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment will, in future, be admitted to hospitals under the control of surrounding authorities at South Petherton, Poole or Salisbury. The closure of the local Isolation Hospital means that some cases of infectious disease which normally would be admitted to hospital will have to remain at home. This will be particularly so when infectious disease is epidemic, and there is an increased demand for beds from authorities already having prior claim on the hospitals referred to.

12. DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

A Special Report on this subject was presented to you early in the current year.

Under 5.    Over 5.

Total number of children who completed course of treatment during the year	41	13
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13. TUBERCULOSIS.

Cases notified:-

	<u>New Cases.</u>		<u>Deaths.</u>
<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>
3	2	-	-

N.F. Pearson

Medical Officer of Health.

